

***TOWN OF NEWFIELDS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2007***

The meeting was called to order at 6:38pm. Selectmen present were: Wes Moore, Michael Woodworth, and James McIlroy. Others present were David Martin, Peggy Arend, and Larry Arend.

A welfare issue was discussed and tabled until further information is available.

The Selectmen went into a non-public session per RSA 91-A3, III at 7:06pm. The meeting was re-opened to the public at 7:15pm.

Dave Martin met with the Selectmen and stated that he is interested in renting the lower portion of the old Post Office Building for storage purposes. He is willing to go with a month to month rental or a lease agreement. James stated that he is not sure that the Selectmen have the authority to enter into a rental agreement.

Wes will contact the Local Government Center for advice and then contact the Town Counsel if further information is needed. The information Wes receives will be discussed at next week's meeting and a decision will be made. Dave was asked to contact Wes next Wednesday for the Selectmen's decision.

Wes advised that he has not received any other quotes to have the pavement repaired and sealed in front of the old Post Office Building. He made a motion to pay \$690.00 to fix the cracks and seal the pavement in front of the old Post Office Building to prevent further damage to the pavement, with the funds to be taken out of line item 4194 – General Government Buildings. Michael seconded the motion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Michael said that some members of the Planning Board are concerned with the landings at each turn in the handicapped ramp. The Selectmen went outside to look at the ramp and determined that a call to Reuben Hull, the Town Planner, is in order. Wes will take care of this and report back to the Selectmen next week.

Peggy Arend asked the Selectmen what happened to the Town Administrator. She and several other residents spent two years researching the position and finding a candidate to fill it. James stated that the position is no longer funded in the budget.

Larry Arend asked what position Reuben Hull holds and was informed that Reuben is the Town Planner.

Peggy asked about the bid process and was told that the Selectmen have control over certain (but not all) purchases by the Town. Peggy stated that she never saw the bid request for the replacement of the rear portion of the Town Hall roof. It was explained that this job was not put out to bid. This was an emergency situation and the job was performed by a roofer that came highly recommended and who replaced other roofs for the Town in the past.

Wes stated that all expenditures are approved by the Selectmen and recorded in the meeting minutes.

Peggy stated that other towns have a process for bidding and asked if Newfields has one and if so, what it is. James advised that the Town does not utilize Purchase Orders. All expenditures necessary are included in the budget and are under control of the department heads. The Selectmen try to put out to bid any jobs over \$500.00, but this does not always happen. The Town does not have a formal process, but is up to the discretion of the Selectmen. Peggy feels there should be a better bid process. James stated that it does cost the Town money to put items for bid in the newspaper and not all items noticed in the newspaper generate responses.

Larry asked if the Town could keep an e-mail list of contractors in town and contact them whenever something is put out to bid. The Selectmen do not feel this is feasible as contractors come and go. Someone would need to keep the e-mail list current. Contractors are welcome to contact the Town Office to view the Selectmen's Meeting Minutes for items currently out for bid.

Peggy is concerned that decisions are being made by the Town without the Selectmen being knowledgeable. She said there is a lot of activity in Town without the jobs being put out to bid.

Peggy asked if there is a building and grounds committee. The Town does not have such a committee. She suggested one be formed. Wes asked Peggy if she were willing to serve on a building and grounds committee.

Peggy asked if the maintenance fund is for maintenance or only repairs. That fund is used mostly for repairs at this time. She said that a building and grounds committee would be able to make up a maintenance schedule for each building the Town owns. She said it is the Town's responsibility to keep the buildings intact. The Selectmen stated that things are getting done, such as the repairs on the salt shed, the Town Hall, and the old Post Office Building.

James feels that Townspeople are not willing to spend money for major renovations/maintenance at this time. The taxes are high now due to the conservation land purchases.

Peggy said that the sidewalks are atrocious in the winter after snowstorms. She said the machine to clear the sidewalks is too big and causes damage. She said Tom Conner used a snowblower which worked fine. The snowblower is not used anymore, but a larger machine is used. She said the sidewalks are not cleared before children have to walk to school and the children end up walking in the street. The Selectmen stated that they have the Road Agent scheduled to meet with them to discuss these issues as another resident brought some of the same issues to them last week.

Peggy stated that the stone wall abutting her property is falling down. She said that the Town owns the wall. She wants a cement base added to the stone wall in order to keep the stone wall from falling down and to properly retain Badger Park. The Selectmen will meet at Badger Park to view the stone wall and will continue the discussion at another meeting.

Michael stated that the Selectmen are aware of the issues and are working with the funds available to make repairs to Town property as efficiently as they can.

Checks were signed.

The Abatements were tabled until the Assessor signs the applications.

The State of New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency notified the Selectmen that a grant was approved for the Town of Newfields for "Newfields Regional DWI Saturation Patrols".

Several Selectmen volunteered to meet with the auditors from Plodzik and Sanderson, PA to review and sign off on the 2006 Annual Audit. The auditors will set up a date and time once the audit has been completed.

The Lane Law Offices correspondence regarding a conservation easement was reviewed.

Wes advised that he has ordered the new curtain for the stage in the Town Hall.

Correspondence to the Newfields Planning Board from Lane Law Offices was reviewed.

The information from the insurance carrier, Primex, was reviewed regarding insurance coverage on contents located at the library.

The notice from the Newfields Village Water and Sewer Department was reviewed.

The notice requesting volunteers for various Town departments was approved and will be posted at the Post Office, Library, and Town Office.

The Selectmen asked Nancy if the Certificate of Insurance had been received from Phillips Exeter Academy for the bicycle race they held in Newfields last week. Nancy advised them no, the Police Chief told her that the bicycle race was not held.

The estimate to paint the interior of the Town Offices was reviewed and the office was viewed by the Selectmen. They decided not to paint the Town Offices at this time.

The letter to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation regarding the proposed bicycle lane was reviewed. Changes were made and the letter should be ready for signatures at the next Selectmen's Meeting.

Wes made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 17, 2007 meeting as amended. Michael seconded the motion and the motion passed with both in favor. James abstained from voting as he was not present at the meeting on April 17th.

James will finalize the changes to the directions to the Dispatch Advisory Committee so that the Selectmen may review them by next week and set up a meeting with the Dispatch Advisory Committee members.

Nancy was asked to contact Win Fream for copies of the spreadsheet he made for the new budget process.

Nancy was asked to contact Brian Knipstein for his help on April 27th with the cleaning out of the Town Hall. One of his trucks will be needed to move the unnecessary items being stored from the Town Hall to the Clean Up Day on Hervey Court for disposal.

Nancy was asked to contact Labor Law Attorney Tom Closson for a date to meet with the Selectmen to review proposed changes to the personnel policy.

The Selectmen were advised that the Cable Committee and the representative from Comcast will be meeting with them on May 8th.

All of the Selectmen will work the Clean-Up Day on April 28th at Hervey Court.

At 9:10pm, Wes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. James seconded the motion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Spencer